

**Elko Convention & Visitors Authority  
Lodging Committee Meeting  
Elko Convention Center  
Gold Room  
700 Moren Way  
Elko, NV 89801  
Wednesday, July 27, 2016  
6:00 PM.  
MINUTES**

**Committee Members Present:** Barry Bhakta, Rodeway Inn  
Marcelo E. Rojas, Thunderbird Motel  
Mahendra Bhakta, Budget Inn  
Jairah Ramirez, Hilton Garden Inn  
Terra Schuette, Oak Tree Inn  
Spencer Gendron, Best Western/Home2Suites  
Hannah Morrison, Holiday Inn Express/Best Western  
Bob Bhakta, Esquire Inn

**ECVA Staff Present:** Don Newman, Executive Director  
Tom Lester, Tourism & Convention  
Kandiss Fallowfield, Events Coordinator  
Amber Merz, Administrative Assistant

**1. Welcome & Introductions;** Barry Bhakta, Chairman

Lodging Committee Chairman, Barry Bhakta called the meeting to order at 5:55 pm.  
Introductions were made around the room.

**2. Public Comments – Non-Action Item**

Pursuant to N.R.S. 241.020, 2 (c) (3) this time is devoted to comments by the general public, if any, and discussion of those comments. No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item on the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on a successive agenda and identified to be an action item.

None at this time

3. Approval of the Minutes from the May 25, 2016 meeting – **Action Item (public comment)**

*Mrs. Jairah Ramirez made a motion to approve the May 25, 2016 Lodging Committee Minutes, Mr. Mahendra Bhakta seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

4. Review of ECVA Activities and Room Tax Update - **Non-Action Item (and)**
5. Review of ECVA Marketing Activities – **Non-Action Item**

Mr. Don Newman stated that since Mrs. Juli Nelson is on vacation he will be combining the Review of Marketing Activities and going over her report as well as his report. Mr. Newman then passed around a stack of various publications and other marketing materials that Mrs. Nelson has been working on. Mr. Newman then explained that because the occupancy reports that the hotels are asked to fill out are voluntary the occupancy reports the City of Elko sends out are very skewed and unreliable. The room tax dollars that we receive are just a percentage of the room tax that is collected. He then stated that we are down about 6 % in room tax funds but he believes that it will start to look up in 2017 with all of the new mining activity that is going on. Mr. Newman stated that we have an advertising contract with Nevada Broadcasters, he explained that we get a value of \$12 million in advertising but it only costs us about \$40,000 a year. He passed around a Nevada Broadcasters report. Mr. Newman then showed the Committee the Nevada Rides Guide that the NCOT puts out and passed it around. He stated that the photo was taken in Lamoille Canyon and was submitted when Juli posted on social media that we were looking for unique pictures of motorcycles in the Elko area to be used for this ad. He stated that the Conference Center has been booked consistently between Newmont, Barrick and all of the summer weddings. He stated that Mrs. Longley is still having to turn away bookings.

6. Review of ECVA Event Activities – **Non-Action Item**

Mrs. Kandiss Fallowfield stated that the Mining Expo went well, everyone loved the Conference Center. Exhibitors were apprehensive to move into the new building at first but after seeing the set up during the Expo they have all been requesting booth changes. She stated that there were 455 booths this year. Having everything spaced out between the buildings created a nice flow of traffic, there didn't seem to be any congestion in the lobby this year. She stated that the Opening Reception at the Red Lion went really well, Kristi and her staff did a great job. She stated that the Safety Olympiad was July 7-9 and Barrick Goldstrike was the hosting mine. She stated that she was sure everyone had read in the paper about the incident that occurred during the event, we unfortunately don't have any more information than the Free Press does as the incident occurred when the office was closed and ECVA employees were not notified until sometime after the fact. Mrs. Fallowfield expressed her concern for the injured employee and stated that she hopes he gets better quickly and can return home.

Mr. Newman stated that Mrs. Fallowfield has been working on the 2016 Elko Classic Car Show which is on September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. He stated that we are hoping for at least 250 cars this year, and we are expecting a few car clubs from out of the area. We will be changing the layout of the show so that the vendors are along the edge of the park and on Moren Way. He stated that we will also be closing Moren Way and a portion of College Ave during the show due to the layout.

#### 7. Review of ECVA Convention and Tourism Activities – **Non-Action Item**

Mr. Tom Lester stated that he has been working with Patrick Pharris of Patrick Media on finishing up the new Meet Me in Elko video, the new version will be loaded onto USB flash drives instead of DVDs. Mr. Lester passed around the flash drive that was ordered for the Meet Me in Elko video. He stated that he is going to be meeting with Mr. Pharris to finalize the video while he is doing sales calls in the Carson City and Reno area. After he returns from Reno he will be going to Dallas Texas for Connect, the largest meeting planner's conference, then he will be attending Small Market Meetings in Alabama. He and Mr. Don Newman will be going to the Governor's Conference on Tourism again as well. He and Don Westfall of the Northeastern Nevada Museum will be attending the Nevada Museum Association Conference, they are hoping to hold it in Elko next year. Mr. Lester stated that the Cowboy Country Territory has over 3100 likes on Facebook and the next Territory meeting will be August 11<sup>th</sup> in Battle Mountain. Mr. Lester then showed the Committee the Cowboy Country Territory video. He stated that he attended IPW, the largest international show for the United States. He met with several different tour operators and had a great meeting with Thomas Cook Tours out of India. Mr. Lester then stated that he is working with Cable One out of Boise, they will be running ads in the Boise and Twin Falls Market. Mr. Lester then passed around a leads report on the new geo-fencing and geo-tracking campaigns he has been doing. Mr. Lester stated that he received a grant to reprint the trifold brochures featuring the different entities, they will be distributed through Certified Folder again once they are reprinted.

Mr. Newman told the Committee that if they want any of these trifold brochures to let us know.

#### 8. Discussion of lodging related opportunities or issues – **Non-Action Item**

Mr. Newman explained to the new Lodging members that this portion of the meeting we go around the room and of the members who have updates or news can share it. Mr. Newman then welcomed Mr. Marcelo Rojas to the Lodging Committee and asked him where he was from.

Mr. Rojas thanked Mr. Newman. He introduced himself and stated that he is originally from France. He explained that he is the manager from the Thunderbird and then stated that he is excited to be here as a part of the Lodging Committee. He stated that the

Thunderbird is under new ownership so they are making all kinds of great improvements to the property.

Mr. Lester asked if anyone knows how many rooms the new Home 2 Suites will have.

Mr. Spencer Gendron stated that it will have 82 rooms.

Mr. Barry Bhakta asked when it would be opening

Mr. Gendron stated that it is expected to open in March or April of 2017.

Mrs. Terra Schuette stated that the Oak Tree Inn has 32 rooms that have been remodeled with kitchenettes.

Mr. Barry Bhakta asked if the rooms were rented monthly or weekly.

Mrs. Schuette stated that they take both short and long term guests.

Mrs. Jairah Ramirez stated that she has no updates this time but everything is going well at the Hilton.

Mr. Lester stated that he forgot to mention the Heritage Festival in his report. He stated that they are hoping to grow the event and he feels it could turn into something as big as Cheyenne Frontier days.

Further discussion on the Heritage Festival took place.

9. Next Lodging Committee meeting: **September 28, 2016.**

10. **Adjourn**

*Meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm.*



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Don Newman  
Executive Director